

2019

Annual Report



Lexington Police
Department

A stylized American flag with a thin blue line running vertically through the center. The stars and stripes are rendered in a dark, textured, almost charcoal-like style. The year '2019' is prominently displayed in the top left corner.

2019

FAST FACTS

- ♦ 18 sworn officers
- ♦ 5 civilian staff
- ♦ Accredited agency since 1998
- ♦ 290 school visits by officers
- ♦ 5,360 calls for service
- ♦ 565 training hours completed
- ♦ 135,173 miles patrolled

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Acknowledgements

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- ◆ Photos from the LPD Photo Archive

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF



I am pleased to present the 2019 Annual Report for the Lexington Police Department. There are many mechanisms in which a municipal law enforcement agency is measured; however, the community is the greatest appraiser of our service.

The statistics from 2019 and the low volume of crime is a synonymous reflection of the extraordinary level of cooperation we have with our professional partners, the Commonwealth Attorney's office, and, most importantly, our community. Within the ranks of the Lexington Police Department, we are committed to community engagement, service excellence and the pursuit of justice so that the community remains confident in

our ability to serve and protect those that live, work, and visit this great city.

The men and women of the Lexington Police Department fully understand the trust bestowed upon us is earned each day through cultivating and maintaining meaningful community relationships. As we move into 2020, we will continue to challenge ourselves towards creating opportunities that will facilitate a collaborative experience, so that together we can continue providing professional, reliable and diverse service.

This annual report is a synopsis of the work we completed this past year. The men and women of the Lexington Police Department are grateful for your continued support. I encourage you to stay connected throughout 2020 by following us on social media, attending our neighborhood watch meetings, or interacting with staff members at the many scheduled and informal community events.

MISSION STATEMENT AND ANNUAL GOALS

We, the members of the Lexington Police Department, exist to serve all people within our jurisdiction with respect, fairness, and compassion.

We are committed to the preservation of peace and the safeguarding of constitutional guarantees. With community service as our foundation, we are driven by goals to enhance the quality of life and fostering a sense of public trust by holding ourselves to the highest standards of performance and ethics.

The Lexington Police Department is dedicated to providing a quality work environment and the development of its members through effective training and leadership.

Leadership, Pride, Duty; the foundation of our agency.



Increased Collaboration: Maintaining liaison with neighboring agencies and localities is critical to providing effective law enforcement services to our community. The department desires to increase collaboration and communication with its surrounding law enforcement agencies by participating in trainings together and supporting one another in multi-jurisdictional efforts.

Crime Prevention: The department will continue to educate the public on the importance of crime prevention through the city's website, social media platform, and various other community forums; while also implementing forward-thinking policing strategies and information gained from utilizing crime analysis programs. Options will also be explored on the locality becoming a Certified Crime Prevention Community, to show our dedication to professionalism and community safety.

Community Service: Provide police services consistent with the vision and values of our community based policing organization, and serve as ambassadors of the city of Lexington with an increased presence of employees at city meetings and functions. Place an emphasis on service provided to our community through the establishment of observable, measurable, targeted, and specific performance objectives for each employee of the department.

Traffic Issues: Provide for a structured approach in dealing with the traffic/parking related issues experienced in the city by utilizing engineering, education, and enforcement strategies in dealing with these problems. Targeted enforcement in school zones, residential areas and primary thoroughfares will be the priority of patrol. Continue traffic initiatives related to aggressive driving, seatbelt violations, red light campaigns and DUI enforcement.

Livability Issues: Focusing on those issues which impact the livability of the citizens we serve will be a high priority. This includes noise complaints, animal complaints, drug enforcement, and enforceable code violations.

Personnel Development: Ensure the growth and motivation of employees, enhance in-house training and develop formal educational opportunities. Develop employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities to better prepare them for other assignments, advancements or promotion.

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW AND ORGANIZATION

Office of the Chief of Police

The Lexington Police Department is commanded by the Chief of Police. During calendar year 2019, the Lexington Police Department was authorized 18 sworn police officers and 5 civilian personnel to provide law enforcement services to the City of Lexington, Virginia.

The Deputy Chief is the second highest rank in the police department and reports directly to the Chief of Police. The Deputy Chief is assigned as the commanding officer of major organizational components such as Professional Standards, Detective Division, Records and the Internal Affairs Group. The Deputy Chief acts as a chief of staff and keeps the Chief of Police informed about all operational activities.

Criminal Investigations Division

The Criminal Investigations Detective is assigned to the investigations of serious felony and misdemeanor offenses that occur in the city. The Detective is typically assigned to follow-up on incidents initially reported to patrol officers; detectives have the training and the time necessary to more thoroughly investigate reported criminal incidents in order to identify suspects, effect arrests, and successfully prosecute cases.

The Narcotics Detective is assigned primarily to major drug investigations and intelligence gathering efforts on individuals and groups involved in the distribution and trafficking of illicit narcotics in Lexington and Rockbridge County.

Patrol Division

The Lieutenant serves as the Commander of the Patrol Division and also oversees the Animal Control and Parking Enforcement Unit.

A Sergeant is assigned to command each of the four patrol shifts. The Sergeant is responsible for the leadership of the shift to ensure that goals and objectives are accomplished. Each Patrol Sergeant is assigned a Corporal and Patrol Officers.

Special Enforcement Unit

The Lexington Police Department is responsible for Parking Enforcement and Animal Control Services. Special Enforcement Officers are equipped and trained to enforce the city parking and animal ordinances. There are many domestic animal owners residing in our city.

It is the goal of the police department's Special Enforcement Unit to ensure that these animals are protected from abuse, confined to the owner's property, and to protect our citizens from animal attacks and destruction of their property.

MEET OUR STAFF

Deputy Chief • Captain Mark E. Riley



Captain Riley attended Dabney S. Lancaster and holds an Associate's Degree with a major in the Administration of Justice with academic honors. He has been employed with the Lexington Police Department since 1993.

He has been assigned to the State Police Regional Drug Task Force and the Criminal Investigations Division as a Detective Sergeant. Captain Riley has risen through the ranks and was promoted to Captain in 2015. He has most recently served as the department's Interim Chief from May 2016 to October 2017.

Patrol Commander • Lieutenant Michael R. Frost



Lieutenant Frost attended Radford University graduating with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice. He has served in the United States Marine Corps as an infantry rifleman and fleet anti-terrorism security force member in active and reserve status.

Lieutenant Frost began his career in law enforcement career with the Roanoke County Police Department in 1997. In 2004, he was hired by the Lexington Police Department and has since acted as a Patrol Shift Supervisor, Vehicle Fleet Manager, Quartermaster, Honor Guard Commander, Driver Instructor and Administrator of the Field Training Program.

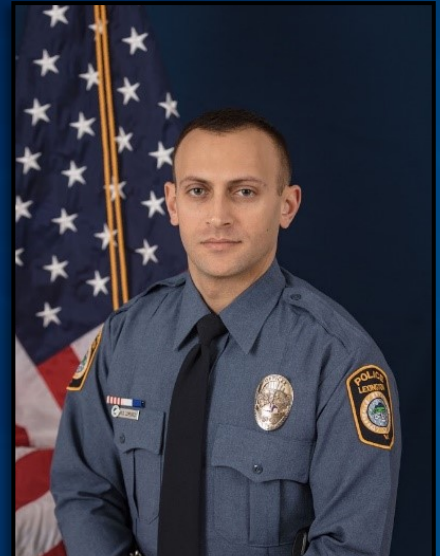
A - SHIFT



1st Sergeant M. Scott Fitzgerald
Serving Since 2004



Officer Gregory W. Gardner
Serving Since 2008



Officer Matthew D. Lombardi
Serving Since 2014

B - SHIFT



Sergeant Michael E. Huffman
Serving Since 1994



Corporal Aaron W. Britton
Serving Since 2014



Officer J. Scotty Panebianco
Serving Since 2018

C - SHIFT



Sergeant Ronald D. Condry
Serving Since 2006



Corporal T. Keith Mohler
Serving Since 2013



Officer Ricardo L. Haston
Serving Since 2016

D - SHIFT



Sergeant Cherie H. Padgett
Serving Since 2005



Corporal Jessica A. Burks
Serving Since 2011



Officer Claude O. Hartbarger
Serving Since 2017



Officer Loran S. Dreelin
Serving Since 2017



Detective Nathan B. Kesterson
Serving Since 2004



Detective Robert E. Smith
Serving Since 2009



Elizabeth S. Knudson
Serving Since 2013



Vicki H. Pickle
Serving Since 2014



Lori N. Condry
Serving Since 2015



Freddie S. Rogers
Serving Since 2016



David E. Husaw
Serving Since 2018

LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICES & STATISTICS

CRIME ANALYSIS

The overall numbers for 2019 showed a decrease in misdemeanor and felony arrests, public intoxication, driving under the influence, speeding, parking, and possession of marijuana offenses.

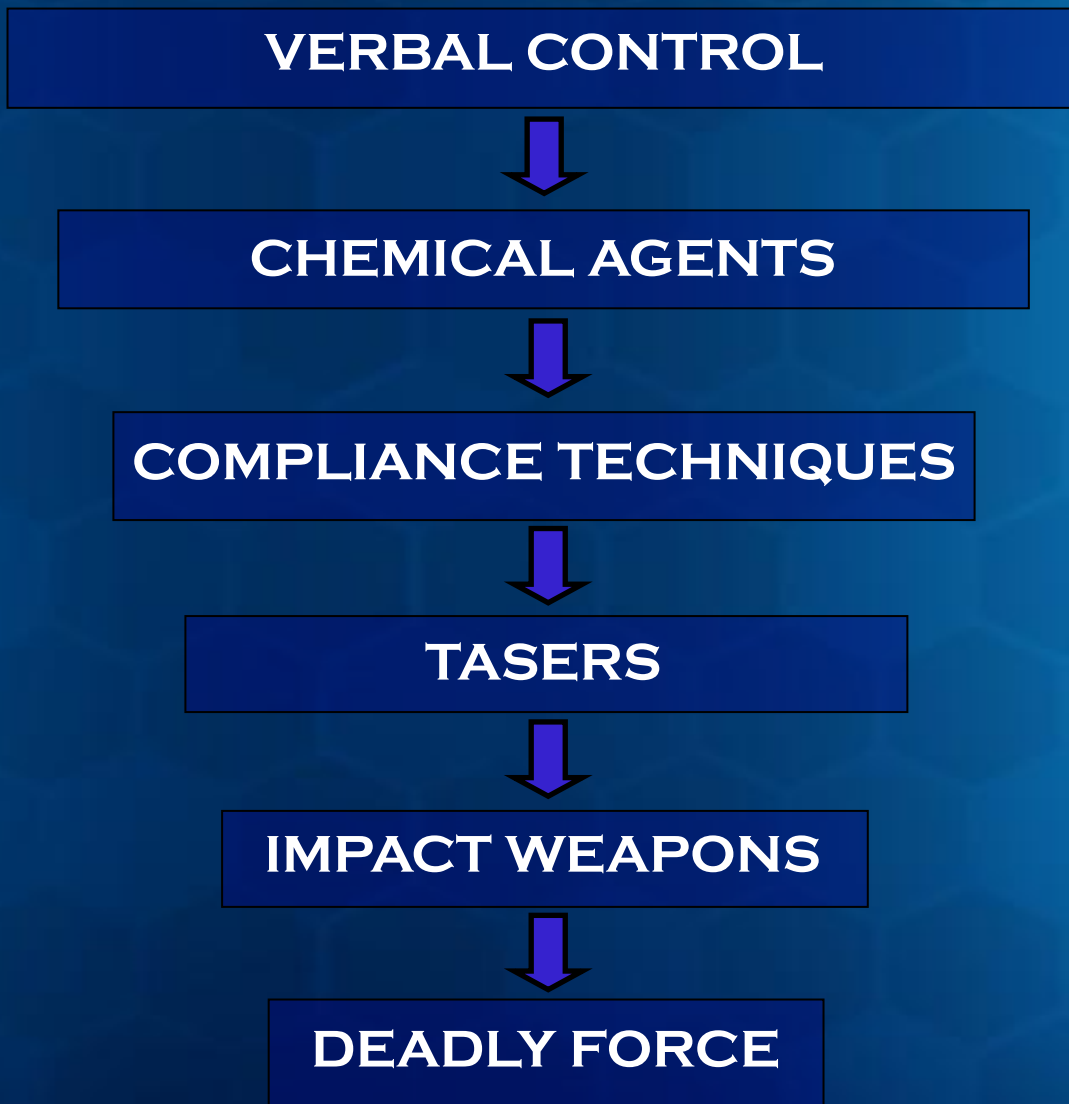
Calls for service to law enforcement agencies generally include calls to 911 for emergency assistance and may also include calls to non-emergency numbers. Calls for service data is typically maintained in law enforcement computer-aided dispatch systems. Total calls for service increased from 5,278 to 5,360.

CRIME TYPE	2016	2017	2018	2019
MISDEMEANOR ARRESTS	251	174	143	83
FELONY ARRESTS	65	36	62	23
DRUNK IN PUBLIC	67	47	23	20
DUI	23	21	21	18
SPEEDING	217	314	306	254
PARKING OFFENSE	451	391	458	322
MARIJUANA POSSESSION	21	15	35	17

USE OF FORCE

Lexington Police Department policy dictates that police officers will use only that force which is necessary to protect life and effect lawful objectives. Every incident in which force is used by a Lexington Police Officer is thoroughly investigated and documented by supervisory staff and is reviewed through the department's chain of command. Supervisory staff monitors officer activity to identify patterns and to provide for consistent, proactive intervention when appropriate. During 2019, officers were required to utilize force in 3 of the 106 arrests made and, of those 3 incidents, the highest level of force used was control holds/compliance techniques. These numbers translate to Lexington officers having used force in approximately 2.8 percent of arrests made; less than 3 percent of all arrests made in the City of Lexington required the use of force.

USE OF FORCE CONTINUUM



NOTEWORTHY INCIDENTS

On April 22, 2019, Detective Kesterson responded to the Lenfest Center at Washington & Lee University for a report of a breaking and entering that took place. An office and camera storage room had been broken into and approximately \$40,000.00 worth of camera equipment was reported missing.

On June 27, 2019, Detective Kesterson was notified that one of the stolen cameras had been sold to a camera company based out of Georgia. Over the course of the next month, 10 of the missing items were sold to this same camera company and were later recovered.

A search warrant was obtained for the PayPal account associated with the transactions to the camera company and the name Michael P. Sonn was discovered. The account information also contained Sonn's personal information, to include his date of birth and social security number, and a subsequent criminal history check later confirmed that the information was valid.

On August 8, 2019, Detective Kesterson traveled to Washington D.C. in an attempt to make contact with Sonn and ask about the money deposited into his PayPal account in connection with the sale of the stolen cameras and equipment. With the assistance of the DC Metro Police, Kesterson located Sonn's apartment but could not get an answer at the door. Sonn later retained a lawyer before agreeing to speak with Detective Kesterson.

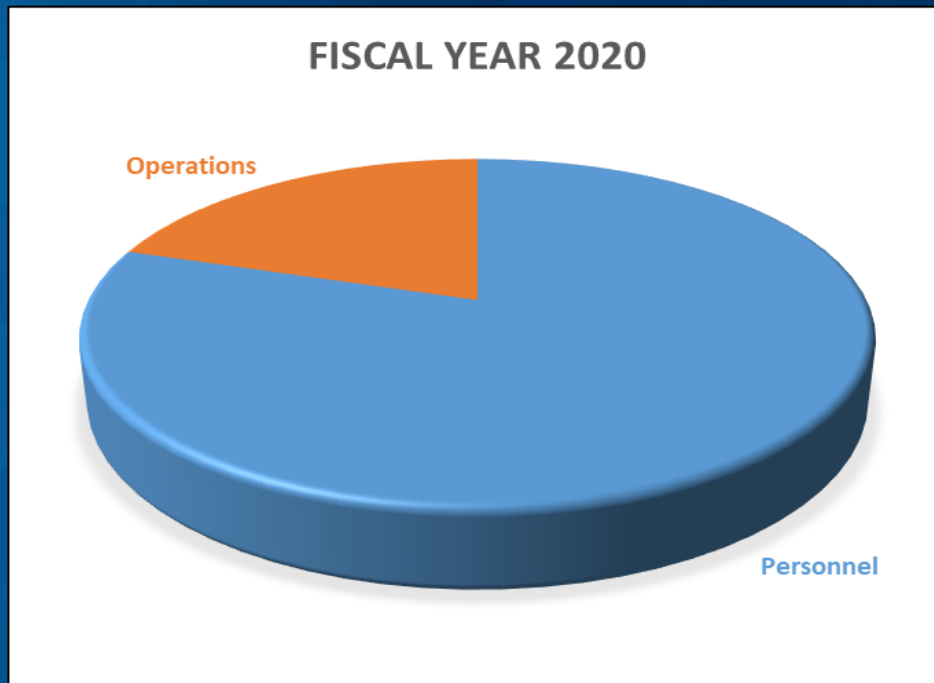
Search warrants were then obtained for Sonn's cell phone records. The cell phone records revealed that Sonn was in the vicinity of the Lenfest Center on the night the camera equipment was stolen. After presenting Sonn's lawyer with the evidence acquired, Sonn was ready to negotiate a deal in exchange for pleading guilty.

On November 4, 2019, Sonn was indicted by a Rockbridge County grand jury for the offense of buying/selling stolen goods valued at over \$200. He was later sentenced to 2 years supervised probation and ordered to pay restitution to Washington & Lee University in the amount of \$41,292.28.

BUDGET INFORMATION

The Lexington Police Department budget is one component of the budget for the City of Lexington and is based on the City's fiscal year from July 1 through June 30. The police department budget is actually composed primarily of two component budgets: the Police Department and the Special Enforcement Unit.

The total police department budget for FY-20 was \$1,927,661.00. Of this amount, \$1,540,843.00 was committed to personnel costs for salaries and benefits, leaving \$386,818, for operational costs.



OPERATIONAL

FY-17	FY-18	FY-19	FY-20
\$336,650	\$340,840	\$339,915	\$386,818

PERSONNEL

FY-17	FY-18	FY-19	FY-20
\$1,378,139	\$1,456,800	\$1,540,843	\$1,540,843

COMMUNITY POLICING & AGENCY ACTIVITIES

HOT PURSUIT 5K



On April 27, 2019, the Lexington Police Department, in collaboration with the Lexington Police Foundation, organized and participated in its 2nd Annual Hot Pursuit 5K race near the Virginia Horse Center. Proceeds from the event benefited the Lexington Police Foundation, a non-profit organization which provides the Lexington Police Department and its members with the resources, equipment, and training it needs in order to do their best work for the community.



LAW ENFORCEMENT UNITED



On May 10, 2019, cyclists and support teams from Law Enforcement United paid a visit to the Lexington Police Department during their 3-day bicycle tour across the Commonwealth from Roanoke, VA to Washington D.C. Law Enforcement United is a 100% volunteer driven organization that is made up of law enforcement, survivors, and civilian supporters who have made it their mission to honoring officers that have died in the line of duty and ensuring that their surviving families are supported and not forgotten.



COMMUNITY COOKOUT



On June 29, 2019, the Lexington Police Department partnered with its Community Watch organization to coordinate and hold the 4th annual Community Cookout event. Members of the community are invited each year to attend and get to know members of the department better while enjoying some free food, music, and a traditional tug-of-war game between cops and the community.



FREEDOM FOOD FESTIVAL



The first annual Freedom Food Festival was held on July 3, 2019 on Main Street in downtown Lexington. Catering teams worked with “celebrity chefs” to raise money for local charities; all proceeds from meals and drinks during the event raised \$18,000. The Lexington Police Department’s “celebrity chef” Chief Sam Roman partnered with George Huger of Southern Inn Restaurant to prepare a picnic-style meal of ribs, potato salad, baked beans and slaw. As the overall winner of the festival, the Lexington Police Department received the Freedom Food Festival Spatula.



NATIONAL NIGHT OUT



The National Night Out Event took place on August 6, 2019 at Rockbridge County High School. National Night Out is an annual community-building campaign that promotes and strengthens relationships between law enforcement and the community. Local law enforcement agencies to include Rockbridge County Sheriff's Office, Buena Vista Police Department, VMI Police Department, and the Virginia State Police were also present. The Lexington Police Department was responsible for coordinating and organizing the event for the year 2019.



MOVIE WITH A COP



The Lexington Police Department hosted their first Movie with a Cop event on August 17, 2019. Community members and their families were invited to Davidson Park for a showing of Detective Pikachu. Members of the department provided free popcorn, snow cones, hot dogs, and drinks to attendees while they sat on the lawn and enjoyed the show.





Twice a year, once during the spring and again in the fall, the Lexington Police Department participates in the National Drug Take Back Initiative. This event, which took place on October 26, 2019, aims to collect prescription drugs and other medications properly disposed of in order to reduce the chances of addiction, misuse, and possible overdoses. As a joint effort with the Rockbridge County Sheriff's Office, 197 pounds of drugs was transported to the DEA office later that same day to be incinerated.



DOWNTOWN TRICK-OR-TREAT



The Lexington Police Department had its first department Halloween costume contest where different officers and staff dressed up in costumes and posted their outfits on the department's Facebook page to be judged; the costume with the most votes from the community was determined to be the winner. Officer Dreelin, dressed up as Officer Judy Hopps, won the contest and assisted Chief Roman and Lieutenant Frost with handing out candy at the Downtown Trick-or-Treat event on November 1, 2019.



SHOP WITH A COP



The Shop with a Cop event took place on December 19, 2019. Young children in need are selected each year to shop at a local area store to purchase gifts to give to immediate family members for Christmas and other needed items for themselves. On the day of the event, Officer Dreelein and Sergeant Padgett partnered up with a number of these children to assist them with selecting appropriate gifts. Over sixty children in total participated in the event and had assistance from other local law enforcement agencies.



DEPARTMENT & EMPLOYEE ACHIEVEMENTS



The Lexington Police Department has been a state accredited agency since January 8, 1998. Accreditation is the process by which the department must demonstrate compliance with 194 professional standards as set forth by the Virginia Law Enforcement Professional Standards Committee (VLEPSC). These standards include department policy, procedures, administration, operations, personnel, and training requirements. A three-day official on-site assessment was conducted on January 29 - January 31, 2019. This assessment included file review, tours of the communications center and the department building, and a static display of department vehicles and other equipment used. Throughout the course of the assessment, the assessment team asked questions if a particular proof of compliance prompted further explanation. All questions were answered to their satisfaction and any additional proofs of compliance that were requested were produced. On January 31, 2019, the assessment team conducted an exit interview with Chief Roman and Accreditation Manager Elizabeth Knudson. The assessment team noted that no accreditation files were returned for any major or minor repairs. On May 9, 2019, the Lexington Police Department came before the Commission and successfully received its sixth accreditation award.

FIRST SERGEANT FITZGERALD



First Sergeant Fitzgerald has served with the Lexington Police Department since 2004. He is a graduate of James Madison University where he received a Bachelor of Science Degree with academic honors. He was promoted to Sergeant in 2012 and has received several department commendations and awards, to include the Lexington Police Department Meritorious Service Medal. On May 16, 2019, First Sergeant Fitzgerald was presented with the Career Service ribbon with 2 bronze stars, signifying his 15 years of service to the Lexington Police Department and the citizens of the City of Lexington.

SERGEANT HUFFMAN



Sergeant Huffman has served with the Lexington Police Department since 1994. He is a graduate of Dabney Lancaster Community College where he received an Associate's Degree in Criminal Justice. He serves as the department's lead firearms instructor and has received numerous department commendations and awards to include the LPD Meritorious Service Medal and Life Saving Medal. On July 26, 2019, Sergeant Huffman was presented with the Gallantry Star Medal. This medal is awarded to officers for performing a distinguished act of bravery in the performance of their duties.

DETECTIVE KESTERSON

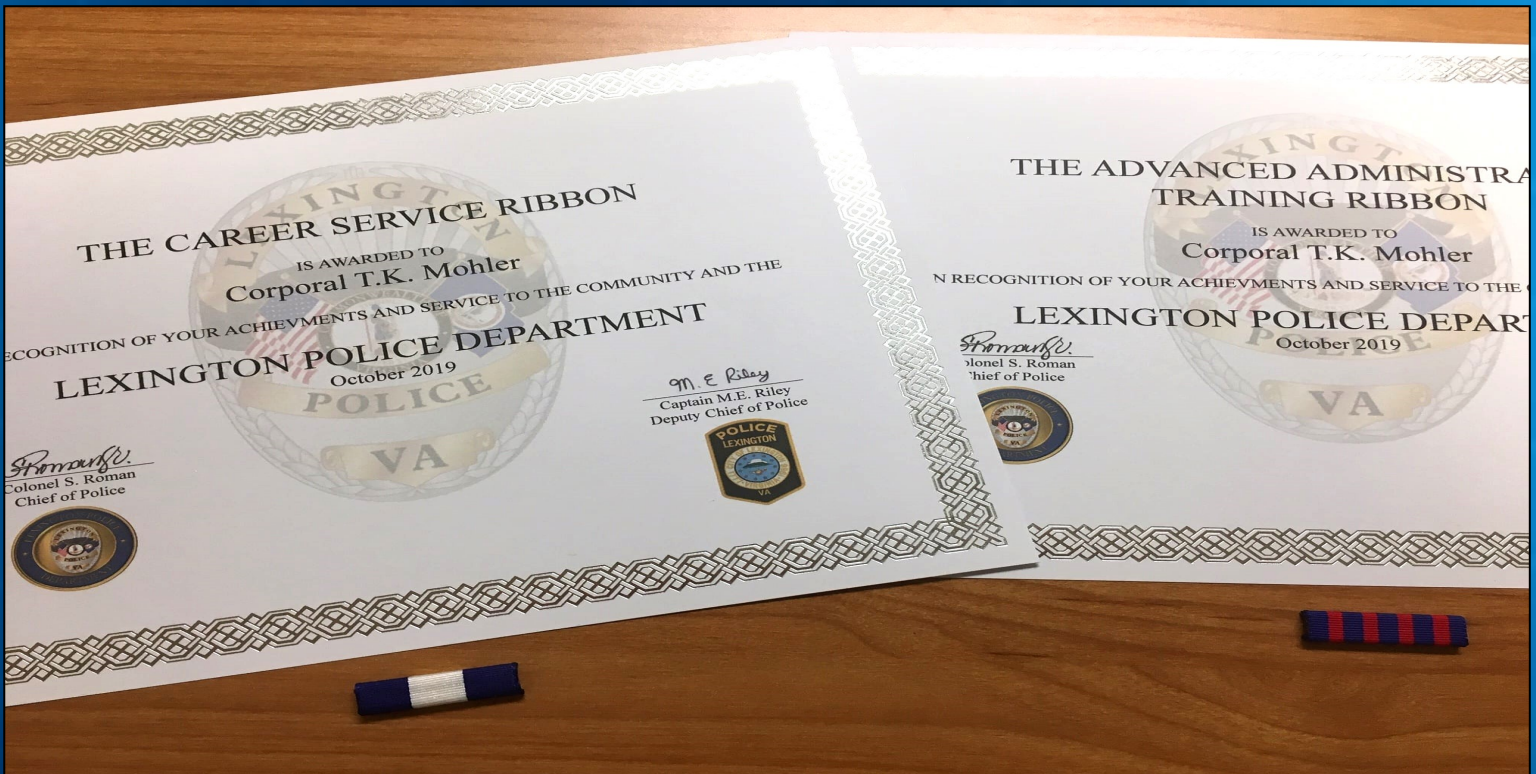


Detective Kesterson has served with the Lexington Police Department since 2004. He was appointed as the department's Criminal Investigations Detective in 2018. On May 16, 2019, Detective Kesterson was presented with the Career Service ribbon with 2 bronze stars, signifying his 15 years of service to the Lexington Police Department and the citizens of the City of Lexington.

CORPORAL MOHLER



Corporal Mohler has served with the Lexington Police Department since 2013. On August 30, 2019, he received the Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) award. Recipients of this award are recognized for their efforts in apprehending and prosecuting intoxicated drivers. On October 4, 2019, Corporal Mohler also received two department awards: the Career Service Ribbon, and the Advanced Administrative Training Ribbon. The Career Service ribbon was awarded for his 5 years of service to the Lexington Police Department and the citizens of the City of Lexington. The Advanced Administrative Training ribbon was awarded to Corporal Mohler for his recent completion of the Institute for Leadership in Changing Times (ILCT) an intensive, 9-day intermediate level leadership education program.



OFFICER GARDNER



Officer Gardner has served with the Lexington Police Department since 2008. Gardner has previously served on the Rockbridge Regional Drug Task Force as a Narcotics Detective. On July 26, 2019, he was awarded the Gallantry Star Medal. This medal is awarded to officers for performing a distinguished act of bravery in the performance of their duties.

OFFICER LOMBARDI



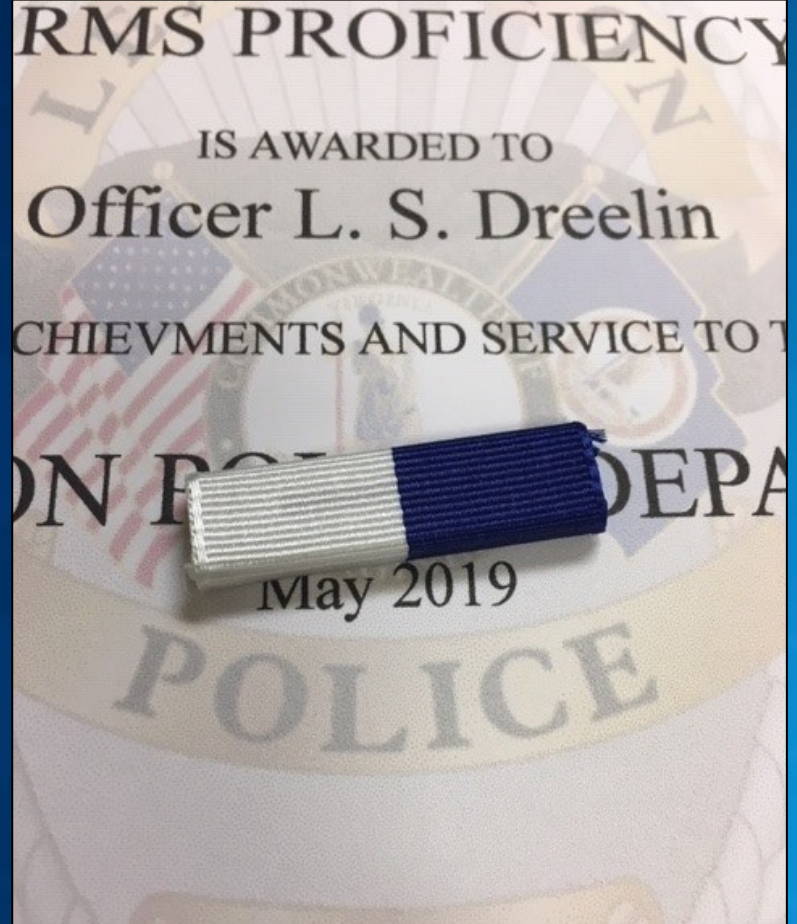
Officer Lombardi has served with the Lexington Police Department since 2014. Officer Lombardi currently serves as a member of the Regional SWAT Team and also as a Bike Patrol Officer on the department's Bike Patrol unit. On July 26, 2019, he was awarded the Gallantry Star Medal. This medal is awarded to officers for performing a distinguished act of bravery in the performance of their duties.

OFFICER PANEBIANCO



Officer Panebianco has served with the Lexington Police Department since 2018. On July 26, 2019, he was awarded the Gallantry Star Medal. This medal is awarded to officers for performing a distinguished act of bravery in the performance of their duties.

OFFICER DREELIN



Officer Dreelin has served with the Lexington Police Department since 2017. Officer Dreelin serves as the Special Enforcement Officer for the department and is responsible for handling ordinance and parking violations for the city. On May 1, 2019, she was awarded the Firearms Proficiency Ribbon. This award is given to officers who maintain a 95% or higher accuracy with their firearms qualifications for two consecutive years.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY VICKI PICKLE



Executive Secretary Vicki Pickle has served with the Lexington Police Department since 2014. On November 30, 2019, Ms. Pickle was awarded her DCJS Crime Prevention Specialist Certification. She had to complete over 120 hours of crime prevention training to receive this award. One of the department's goals is for the City of Lexington to become a certified crime prevention community; eligibility requirements include having a DCJS certified crime prevention specialist. This accomplishment by Ms. Pickle is a huge step towards achieving that goal.

Commonwealth of Virginia



Department of Criminal Justice Services


This will acknowledge that

Vicki H. Pickle

has met the minimum training requirements as established
within the Commonwealth of Virginia for

Crime Prevention Specialist Certification

In accordance with sections 9.173.19 and 9.173.20 of the *Code of Virginia*


Donna P. Michaelis, Director
Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety

November 30, 2022
Expiration Date

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